2: Lee T-5 (1855-1858) 1957
NO6 Comanche NO6

posed to be somewhat fastidious. The chief sent for some half-dozen, submitting them to my inspection, before a choice was made. Some of them were hideous, either lank and cadaverous, or fat and flabby, having a fiery red new moon painted over each eye, and the full moon in the center of the forehead. These were rejected without hesitation or ceremony. At length one was brought that was pronounced entirely satisfactory. She was small and slender, very young and very agile. There was the grace of nature in her carriage, and, besides, she was not quite as filthy as her companions. She was arrayed in the latest Indian fashion when brought in for examination, wearing prettily embroidered moccasins, colored leggins, calico short gown of many colors, with a great diversity of beads braided profusely in her hair. She was distinguished as the most expert swimmer and deepest diver in the tribe; wherefore, they had bestowed upon her the name of *To-ma-no-a-ku-no*, the Sleek Otter. Altogether, she was rather a dirty but very comely maiden, in no wise equal to Kianceta, the Weasel, but much fairer than the great majority of her race. With her I entered into the holy estate of matrimony for the space of one moon. After the wedding festivities, the squaws generously assisted her in building a tent, bringing in presents of buffalo skins wherewithal to construct it, after the fashion of a donation party; and when it was finished, we moved in and "went to keeping house." The Sleek Otter made me a faithful and affectionate wife, skinned the deer, cooked the venison, pounded the corn, mended my moccasins, and in all respects performing her conjugal duties with cheerfulness and alacrity. The course of true love ran so smooth that we glided harmoniously through the third moon, and, therefore, became irrevocably joined.

Subsequent to the marriage my privileges were very much

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

584 bride himself and waited near by without saying a thing to see if his gift were acceptable. Of course, the girl and her family knew from whom the proffered gift came even if the owner were not visible. Sometimes the girl was dressed up and brought out of the lodge right away and handed over to the suitor, who came forth to accept his prize when he saw that his gift was accepted. At other times the suitor tied his riding horse at the maiden's lodge door and waited out of her sight. If she wished to reject him, she merely turned the horse loose, but if she drove it to the herd, the act signified her willingness to accept the owner and was symbolical evidence that she was willing to take charge of his horses and other property. This simple ceremony seems to have been used frequently even after the herd had been placed in front of the girl's door.[16]

585 In most cases there was no further ceremony. The bridegroom took the bride to his tipi. There was no necessity for any religious ceremony, no demonstration. If circumstances permitted, there might be feasting and, occasionally, dancing. There is evidence that an occasional marriage did receive official sanction either from the chief, who had the announcement made to the camp, or from the council. The scanty evidence available does not make clear whether these were customary practices of specific bands or whether it was a matter of individual taste, as a public or private ceremony in our own society.

Another form of ceremony which has been reported is that after the horses had been delivered and accepted, the bridegroom killed one of the least valuable, removed the heart, and hung it at the door of his betrothed. After the bride roasted and divided it into equal parts, it was eaten by the couple. The heart of a buffalo or other animal could be substituted.[17]

583 When a girl learned that a rich suitor whom she did not care to marry was about to propose, she might elope with the man she loved. Couples occasionally eloped when the boy was poor and unable to

[16] This description of obtaining a wife is compiled from statements by informants Kills Something, See How Deep the Water Is, and Medicine Woman; also, Battey, *op. cit.*, 328; Gregg, *op. cit.*, 431–32; Daniel A. Becker, "Comanche Civilization," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. I (1923), 250; Mooney, "Calendar History of the Kiowas," *loc. cit.*, 231–33; R. B. Marcy, *Thirty Years of Army Life on the Border*, 49; Lehmann, *op. cit.*, 177–79; Agent Charles Adams to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 12, 1890 (Oklahoma Historical Society Library, correspondence file K–33, p. 414).

[17] Gregg, *op. cit.*, 431–32.

21: Burnet T-5 (1818-1819) 1954 NO6 Comanche NO6
Texas

[ca. 1818]

175 754 perament of the climate they inhabit, would seem to preclude the existence of consumptive diseases amongst them.

175 789 [237] They have faith in certain preternatural charms, and think, or affect to think, the oil of the beaver rubbed on the surface of the body, an impenetrable barrier to a ball; and will relate with infinite self-complacency, how the Goch-chupin's (Spaniards) balls, have hit them here and there, and fallen harmless to the ground. This idea may possibly have some operation and impart a factitious boldness to their minds, when opposed to the *Scopete* or Spanish musket; but few will be found of sufficient hardihood to repose confidence in their magical shields, when assailed by the ball of a rifle. They have an indescribable dread of that potent and unerring weapon.

175 751 They sometimes wear around the neck, one or more highly aromatic kernels, resembling the Vanilla bean, which they esteem as amulets of infallible efficacy in preventing disease; and they indulge many other and more frivolous whimsicalities that are not worthy of notice in a description so cursory as this.

175 595 [585] The Comanchees admit of polygamy to an unlimited extent, and have no fixed ceremonials of marriage. Their principal warriors have often from five to eight or ten wives, being restrained only by their own capricious humours. Carno-san-tua, (The Son of America), a chief of some note, left 10 widows to bewail his untimely death.

[687] The most comely of them, however, were soon dispersed, to herd with the connubial slaves of other Lords of the creation; while the less favoured retained their weeds, and prolonged their severe and sanguinary discipline of lamentation for the dead. The redoubtable warrior generally proportions the number of his help-mates to his means of maintenance, which implies simply animal sustentation, and in procuring which, his only agency is the killing of game.

175 593 462 His wives, one or more of whom are always in attendance on his hunting excursions, perform the duties of ostler in catching, saddling, and turning out his horse; of page, in carrying his implements of the chase; of butcher and porter, in skinning and transporting his meat; and of cook and waiter, in preparing and serving it up. The Squaws are

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1960 NO6 Comanche NO6
(ca. 1870)

584 unfrequently the talons and beaks of the prairie eagles and falcons, a breast-
301 plate of "hair pipe," and perhaps a few bright plates of metal cut into the
291 form of crosses and crescents and sewed to his gorgeously colored suit of
237 dressed skins. So attired, with his face sometimes painted brown, or blue,
584 and at other times flaming in vermillion colors, or yellow as the victims
302 of "the plague of the Indies," the Comanche beau mounts his pony and proceeds to the lodge of his inamorata, dismounts, and, if the maiden comes and hitches his pony, enters and squats upon the ground; and displays his discontent with his lot by responding to every inquiry with a most dolorous
584 "Ugh! Ugh!" After manifesting his misery to an extent deemed sufficient, the Comanche young gentleman rises with great dignity, and repeating two or three knell-like "Ugh! Ughs!" he remounts and rides off without so much as deigning to utter a word. If the maiden he desires to woo does not take charge of his pony, that ends the courtship. He would despise himself and be the fool of the tribe to persist under such circumstances.

An account of this visit is carefully certified to the master of the lodge, on his return. Our dandy, like many civilized gallants, is always very careful to make his initiatory visit when paterfamilias is not at home. The way is now open for further negotiations. The girl is not usually again consulted. The young dandy has merely condescended to indicate his preference for her. She of course must be delighted. If the father is a chief or
584 principal man in the tribe, he provides a dower for the daughter. The
583 young suitor must be able to respond in equal measure in the way of presents of this world's goods. Sometimes a Comanche belle may have, as a portion, as many as fifty ponies. The suitor in such case should be prepared to turn over fifty-one ponies as a present to his would be father-in-law.
[585] If this can be done, a bargain is usually concluded. No further ceremony is necessary. The maiden and her fifty ponies become the absolute property of the young man. He has "swapped" fifty-one ponies for fifty ponies and got a wife, or rather slave, into the bargain.

585 When negotiations have been concluded, the dandy proceeds to the lodge of his bride, but not in the same plight as before. He enters, throws down his deer skin mantle, casts from him his weapons, and then orders the bride to enter upon her duties as a wife and slave by taking them up and proceeding to follow him to his own lodge, bearing the burdens he has thrown down for her.

[595] The bride may have three or four sisters, and they may all be wives of her husband before the expiration of a week. Mothers-in-law excite
606 little feeling, either of favor or aversion, among the Comanches. They play
585 a minor part in the affairs of the newly constituted households.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

115 Choctaw and had served in a Mississippi regiment during the war. He had married a white woman who was a good dressmaker. They decided to see the West from a covered wagon. When they got to North Texas, they began working at the different ranches. His wife would do sewing for the womenfolks, and our narrator would work as a ranch hand.

In due time, they drifted to the Comanche country and worked 643 for Quanah Parker. Chief Parker was running both cattle and horses [231] on his ranch and was in need of a rider. The cowboy's wife sewed for the womenfolks. But Chief Parker was having trouble. A young 643 Texan named Emmet Cox was running some long-horned steers on 593 Comanche graze, and this personable young cattleman was wanting 584 to marry one of Quanah's daughters, named Nau-noc-ca.

Chief Parker was willing, the bridegroom was eager; it was Nau-noc-ca who was holding up the parade. She was a new kind of a Comanche girl to her father. He was chief of all the Comanches, and from time to time he was called to Washington to confer with the President of the United States; but he no longer ruled his own household.

When he told one of his daughters to marry this white man by a Comanche ceremony, she said no. And she kept on saying no. This was something the chief couldn't understand—a no, coming from one of his own womenfolks.

643 Nau-noc-ca had been attending the school for Indians at Carlisle, 593 Pennsylvania, and she was doing her own thinking and planning. 584 Somewhere during her schooling she made the discovery that she 177 was her own woman. She had no objections to the bridegroom. It is very possible she was flattered to be the choice of this well-to-do young white man. She had been educated in the white man's school at Carlisle, in the white man's ways. She herself was one-quarter white, and she was marrying a white man. Why shouldn't she be dressed as a white bride would dress, and be married by a white minister? These were her demands.

All the commands of her father, all the pleadings of her intended husband and attempted persuadings by her mother, Wec-ke-ah, went for naught. She had lost all fear of disobeying her father, and her 643 decision was final. A white bride's trousseau, a wedding like a white 593 woman's wedding with a white Christian minister, or no wedding.
585 Quanah and the groom surrendered. Our Indian cowboy's wife 177

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

was told to make a list of the things a white girl would require for a wedding outfit. Consulting at all times with Nau-noc-ca as to her wishes, his wife made out the list, and Quanah sent our narrator, with the money and a packhorse, to Wichita Falls for the wedding finery.

So Nau-noc-ca married her white lover, dressed in all the furbelows and adornments a white girl could have wished, and a white missionary minister performed the ceremony.

"Stranger He Come"

IN THE SPRING of 1922 I found it necessary to spend a weekend at Gage, a small Northwest Oklahoma town. While I was there, an old cowman told me a story about his dealings with Quanah Parker. The old chap said he was a cowboy on the first cattle drive across the Comanche land, in what is now Oklahoma, and he was trail boss on the second herd to cross Quanah Parker's domain. This would have been shortly after the surrender of the Comanches to the Army at Fort Sill in June, 1875, and before Quanah began leasing graze to Burnett and Waggoner, Texas ranchers.

An experienced drover came to the community where his father's ranch was located, wanting to make up a trail herd of stock cattle. That is to say, he wanted a herd of mostly "she stuff"—yearling heifers to old cows—bulls, and yearling steers. He proposed to drive this herd to Wyoming, where there was a market for stock cattle with Wyoming ranchers.

He had made a number of drives to Dodge City, Kansas, and had seen such herds being put together from rejects; cows heavy with calf, cows with calves at their sides, bulls, and steers and heifers too young or otherwise unsuited for the butcher or feed-lot buyers. These herds were being trailed to Wyoming.

My narrator got his job, largely because his father had been the first to sign up cattle for the proposed drive. The drover planned to cross Comanche land, because it would save at least 120 miles—60 east and 60 back west—and to overtake the herd by way of the Chisholm trail. Eight miles is a good day's drive of stock cattle, and this route would shorten the drive at least fifteen days. The drover had recently delivered a herd of steers to the Army at Fort Sill for issue to the Indians, and had met Quanah Parker.

The Chief had agreed, for so many large steers, to let him drive